



**COUNTY OF DUTCHESS**  
BOARD OF HEALTH

**DUTCHESS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Minutes**  
**Thursday, June 16, 2022**

The regular monthly meeting of the Dutchess County Board of Health was held virtually on Microsoft Teams and at the Dutchess County Department of Behavioral & Community Health (DBCH), 85 Civic Center Plaza – Suite 106, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 on the above date.

**PRESENT:** John Fallon, NP  
Doug McHoul, Legislative Rep.  
Maria Muller, RN  
Melissa Nelson-Perron, MD  
Laura Fil, DO  
David McNary, Vice President  
Marc Nelson, MPA, Secretary

**ABSENT:** Lobsang T. Lhungay, MD, President

**VISITORS:** Rachel Kashimer, Assistant County Executive  
Anthony Ruggiero, MPA, DC DBCH Assistant Commissioner of Administration  
Livia Santiago-Rosado, MD, FACEP, DC DBCH Commissioner  
Michelle Greulich  
Desiree Surplus  
Kahan Sablo

**CALL TO ORDER** – Mr. McNary called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

**DECLARATION OF A QUORUM** – A quorum was called.

**MINUTES** – The minutes of the May 19, 2022, meeting were reviewed. Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve the May minutes, Mr. McHoul seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

**SECRETARY'S UPDATE** – No correspondence

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT** – Thankfully, as we headed into our 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Health Fair, Covid levels were lowered to Low Community Transmission. Mr. Nelson stated he heard that the Health Fair was a huge success. Dr. Santiago detailed that it was better than we had hoped for, we had good attendance, exhibitors got to know each other better and learned about resources they didn't know were available. One of our goals is to work on gaps to access and making sure organizations know each other so we can work to better connect systems from as large as a

hospital to as small as a food pantry. When we work in silos we can only do so much and by expanding access to all resources we can address all issues an individual may be facing. One of the biggest surprises was being able to accomplish as much as we did in such a short amount of time. Dr. Santiago was very pleased with how well our department was represented. There were many first-time introductions, particularly with agencies we refer individuals to but we have never met face to face.

The Wappingers Central School District's (WCSD) Step Team participated by doing two performances at the Health Fair. The WCSD Step Team was started by a student who moved to the area and her new school didn't have the activity she loved to participate in at her old school, so she started one herself. Dr. Santiago said health isn't just about taking medicine and seeing doctors, it's also about being positive, active, and choosing healthy activities. The guests attending the Health Fair were of various age ranges, from families with young children to seniors. Dr. Nelson-Perron, who participated with her students from Nuvance, said the Health Fair was well done and she particularly liked the passport idea which invited families to walk around and interact with exhibitors to be entered for raffle prizes.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**ANTI-OBESITY** – Dr. Santiago sent out an email to the Board a few weeks ago with an article on school lunches and health programming. Mr. Nelson suggested removing this from the monthly agenda as this is not an active committee and currently does not have a chair.

**HEALTH DISPARITIES** – Dr. Fil and Dr. Nelson-Perron have been reaching out to invite new members to the committee and reviewed previous meeting minutes and membership list received from Ms. Cady. They inquired if there were any specific disparities that were at the forefront for the Board of Health members. Mr. Nelson stated that he felt that the most recent work of this committee centered around Covid and that he was willing to be available to assist in any way possible. Mr. McNary inquired about the Health Status of the County and that maybe we should review that data at the August meeting to help us determine what topics we should focus on. Dr. Santiago mentioned that we have just finished collecting the 2022 data for our Community Health Assessment (CHA) and it will be released soon. There are some other options for gathering data as well, the CHIRS (Community Health Indicator Reports) and CHIRE (County Health Indicators by Race or Ethnicity), both have websites that are accessible. The data has brought us back to our earlier discussion with the health fair and that we need to do a better job of connecting the dots and bringing what is available to those who need it. One of the ways we collected the data for the CHA was a Siena poll that was a collaboration with multiple counties to assess the community's opinion regarding their healthcare. The data is provided to us by each individual county and other groups of data are also used.

**SANITARY CODE** – The public hearing for the proposed sanitary code changes was postponed so that the Board can hold one public hearing and address all the proposed changes for the year versus holding a separate public hearing for each of the proposed changes. Ms. Brule hopes to present the next set of changes at the August meeting with possible public hearing in October

or November. Dr. Fil requested that the next sanitary code have track changes to make it easier to determine the actual changes.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT** – We are moving forward in the process of the Homeless Shelter at Oakley Street by approving the funding. The shelter is being modeled after a Bergen County, NJ, program which seems to be very successful. They expect to have 120 beds and it will be a huge advantage for the City of Poughkeepsie. The legislature also approved a budget amendment for the Medical Examiners Office contract with Rensselaer County and the Veterans Micro Grant was approved for \$150,000 to give out to Veterans organizations (501C3) to upgrade facilities, hold events, or install monuments. The grants are maxed at \$15,000 each.

### **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

**COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE** – Ms. Kashimer, Assistant County Executive, introduced herself and stated that Ron Hicks from the County Executive's office will also be attending future meetings and he is more involved with the business aspect of the county. Ms. Kashimer oversees the Department of Behavioral & Community Health (DBCH), Department of Emergency Response (DER), District Attorney, and Dutchess County Jail. Mr. McNary asked if there was going to be some sort of evaluation of our Covid response. Ms. Kashimer stated that we are currently working with Orange County and a contractor on an After-Action Report that will be available to the public once completed. They are currently in the process of interviewing staff who participated in the response. This year we have focused on building connections with DER and DBCH with health & emergency preparedness which allowed us to embed DBCH staff at DER including our Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) Coordinator. Homeland Security is looking at the way we restructured Emergency Preparedness with the possibility of sharing it as a model moving forward. Mr. Nelson inquired if there is a role the Board of Health can play for future events? The Board of Health had some contention and were reluctant to share opinions and would like to be better prepared for future events. Ms. Kashimer stated there are many potential emergencies in the future and with the collaborations and partnerships that have been developed because of the Covid pandemic we are in a much better position to respond. Some of those partnerships were built with nursing homes, mayors & supervisors, school superintendents, and daycare providers. As department walls came down and everyone chipped in to do their part, we accomplished what needed to be done. We are still maintaining some of the partnerships that were developed even though we aren't discussing Covid. Next week we are hosting school superintendents and police chiefs to talk about school safety. The Board thanked Ms. Kashimer for attending and invited her to attend future meetings.

**COVID-19 UPDATE** – We are currently at a Low Community Level and we will be closing the testing site at JC Penney at the end of the month. The predominate variant is the BA2 family but there are some BA4 & BA5 circulating. Currently, those 18 years and older with one dose of Covid vaccine is approximately 85%. Those ages 5 – 12 years old with one dose of vaccine is approximately 37% and 12 – 17 years old is running at about 71%. Approval of Pfizer vaccine for 6 months – 4 years old and Moderna for 6 months – 5 years old has happened so those age groups are eligible to receive vaccine. The numbers are concerning but more upsetting is the reason for those numbers which is pediatricians not engaging their families in conversations

regarding the benefits of the vaccine. Dr. Santiago wrote an article for the Dutchess County Medical Society newsletter regarding the importance of Covid vaccine and encouraging physicians to have ongoing conversations with their patients to actively encourage them to get vaccinated. Pediatricians took the brunt of the anger and fear from parents and have been worn down. Dr. Fil and Dr. Nelson-Perron both said the ER is seeing Covid cases in kids and they are surprised we are in the low transmission but maybe families just aren't testing any longer. We have many at home test kits and you can report your positive at home test on the Dutchess County website. One of the only remaining contact tracing pieces is within nursing homes and jails.

**PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS** – Mr. McNary presented three resolutions before the board. The first resolution was regarding climate change and the impact that change will have on the health of the residents of Dutchess County. Mr. McNary made a motion to adopt the resolution and Mr. Nelson seconded. Mr. McHoul stated that there is a Climate Task Force already within the County and the County is a Bronze Level. It was suggested that because there may be ongoing work already within the county the Board of Health wouldn't want to adopt a resolution that doesn't include initiatives that are already ongoing within the county. Mr. McNary questioned whether any of the current initiatives were health related. The Climate Smart initiative is on the county website and will be shared with the Board of Health members. The resolution was withdrawn pending further information.

The second resolution was to invite key representatives of different medical and health organizations to meet periodically with the Board to hold conversations regarding plans, strategies and initiatives related to enhancing the health status of the county. Two sessions would be scheduled for 2022 with others to be scheduled thereafter on a regular basis. Mr. McNary made a motion to accept the resolution and Mr. Nelson seconded, the motion passed unanimously. See attached resolution.

The third resolution was for the Board of Health to receive a \$100,000 budget within the Department of Behavioral & Community Health (DBCH) budget and a prorated amount be given for the 2022 year. Mr. McNary made the motion to accept the resolution, Mr. Nelson seconded the motion for discussion purposes. There was discussion as to what the funds would be spent on. Mr. McNary stated that 60 – 70% of the 3 billion spent on health care goes to chronic disease and the budget would give the Board of Health opportunities to address the health needs of the county. Mr. Nelson stated that the Board of Health has never had a budget but that there is a process that includes the County Executive, who crafts the budget that is submitted to the Legislature for approval. The county frowns upon mid-year budget amendments and it was suggested that the Board ask for a budget line for the 2023 budget with a specific plan for what the funds would be used for. Mr. Nelson stated he would be happy to work on a proposal for the County Executive. Mr. Ruggiero stated that the County Attorney stated the Board of Health could not have their own budget but could be a part of our DBCH budget for a specific purpose. Depending on the plan submitted by the Board, they could be eligible for state aid or grants. It was recommended that the Board focus on specific activities or tasks that they would want to accomplish within a year and should be done quickly as the deadline for submitting the 2023 budget is in the next few weeks.


**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** Mr. Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. McHoul seconded, all were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: Thursday, August 18, 2022**

**2022 EXECUTIVE POSITIONS FOR THE BOARD OF HEALTH**

Dr. Lobsang T. Lhungay – President  
David McNary – Vice President  
Marc Nelson – Secretary

Minutes signed by

  
Marc Nelson  
Secretary of the Board of Health

  
Wendy Cady  
Recording Secretary

**The Board of Health  
For  
The Department of Behavioral and Community Health  
Dutchess County, NY**

The purpose of the Dutchess County Board of Health is to be concerned with the security of life and health of the people of the Dutchess County Health District (DCBH Procedural Outline)

The Board of Health, ...shall have the power to consider any matters that may come to its attention relating to the preservation and improvement of public health within the county, and advise the Commissioner thereon, either at her request or upon its own initiative, and from time to time to make recommendations to the Commissioner thereon. (Article VII, section 7.03 of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health)

**Therefore:**

**Resolve:**

The Board of Health invite key representatives of different medical and health organizations, functioning within Dutchess County, to meet periodically with the Board to hold conversations regarding plans, strategies and initiatives related to enhancing the health status of the citizens of the county.

Two such sessions should be scheduled for 2022 and others scheduled thereafter on a regular basis. The summary of such discussions will be publicly distributed. It is anticipated that the Department of Behavioral and Community Health will likewise participate in these discussions.